

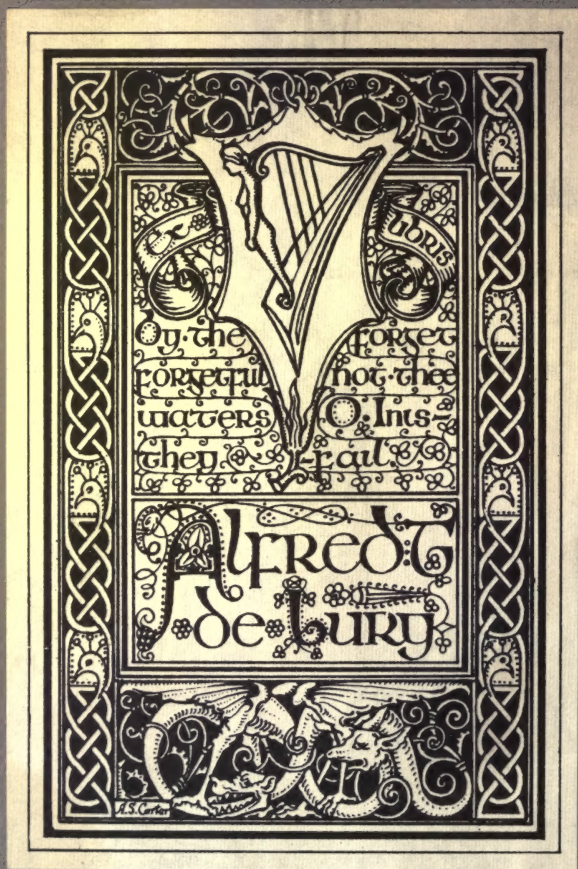
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Weekes, Charles  
About women

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ABOUT WOMEN  
Verses: By Charles Weekes  
Being Number One of the  
Tower Press Booklets  
Second Series . . . . .



MAUNSEL & CO., LTD.,  
96 Middle Abbey Street  
Dublin . . . . .





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*To*

GORDON LLOYD TREVOR KENYON

*Acknowledgment is due and  
rendered to certain editors  
for permission to reprint some  
of these verses.*

# CONTENTS

|                       |    |                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|----|
| In the Park . . .     | 9  | All for the Sake of a |    |
| Mothers' Business . . | 10 | Lady . . .            | 21 |
| In the Paddock . . .  | 12 | Consolation . . .     | 22 |
| Man's Business . . .  | 14 | Modern Apologue . .   | 24 |
| Apologia pro Vita     |    | Thanks . . .          | 28 |
| Sua . . .             | 15 | May . . .             | 29 |
| The Angler . . .      | 16 | The Idler . . .       | 30 |
| The Rebuke . . .      | 17 | In Brittany . . .     | 31 |
| Maid's Error . . .    | 18 | A Name . . .          | 32 |
| Maid's Test . . .     | 19 | Spring . . .          | 33 |
| Hair-o'-gold . . .    | 20 | Scorn . . .           | 34 |
| Tribute . . .         | 36 |                       |    |





## IN THE PARK

**SHE** ne'er shall be made of the throng of wives:

Her body is brown—as the golden dun

Of the honey-bees in the evening sun,

When they come singing home to the quiet  
hives :

She sits, where the green water spurts and  
drives,

On the ledge of the monster marble dish,

Playing a game with the silly fish,

To bereave them of their lives.

## MOTHERS' BUSINESS

THERE, he smokes,  
On the river ;  
Off ! and take the tiller for him :  
Go and take it, little coax—  
Don't stand here and shiver !  
Poof ! you mouse :  
Now or never,  
Go and catch him for yourself, dear :  
Off !—and show a bit of *nous* :  
—Else hang fire for ever !  
True, his nose  
Is growing ruddy ;  
And his eye (once like a hawk's eye)—  
Well, we all see how it grows  
Stupid, dull, and muddy.  
Drinking, that :  
Yes, and—*you* know :  
Give one wrench for his salvation ;  
Now's the time to do it pat :  
What do you care who know !



If he drink,  
    Why—endure it.  
On the whole he'll show you better—  
    Mighty better sport, I think,  
    Than the curate.

If he's bald,  
    Sarah Grand  
Even can't keep some men's hair on :  
    And he's really—what's it called ?  
    —Charming—bland . . .

Ouf ! you sphinx :  
    Do consider  
For a moment what you're made for :  
    Will you let the Gadsby minx  
    Find him out a bidder ?

## IN THE PADDOCK

HERE she comes.—Soho ! the filly :

Trot her up—eh ?

There's a croup—eh ?

There's some action :

There's attraction :

There's a pastern for you, Billy !

Sho !—the beauty. Quarters nice—eh ?

From the dam they

Get that ham ; they—

All the daughters

Have those quarters

—What ? She *has* a bit of vice—eh ?

Watch the eye ! A perfect pet, sir—

With her jawful

Of a snaffle :

—Sire. You wonder . . . ?

Brimstone !—thunder !

See the stud-books : *Burke, Debrett*, sir.

And the very latest foaled, too :

Reg'lar freezer :

Just you tease her.

—Here they come, boy :

Hist, boy !—mum, boy !

—“ *Aw—how do ?—how do ?—how do ?*”



## MAN'S BUSINESS

NEVER call her to your side.

Are you not life-satisfied ?

Let her range

Till she feel

Sure as steel :

Love is love when treble-tried.

And the world is broad and wide ;

And the nymph for whom you sighed

(Life is change)

Will be shortly

Dull and portly—

Better have her treble-tried.

Are you not work-satisfied ?

Never call her to your side.

Keep her strange

Till you feel

Her at your heel :

Love is love when treble-tried.

*APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA.*

I **BUT** caught and kissed it.  
It looked such a giant male thing :  
Such a weak and poor and pale thing !—  
Barely touched and twisted,  
It must straightway die  
Like a beastly butterfly !  
Said he : “ Yes, I love you :  
Only let me—let me go, dear ! ”  
Then I gripped him smartly : “ No, dear !  
I must have you—have you  
For myself ! ”—I said :  
Pinched him—and he dropped down dead !

## THE ANGLER

**SHE** throws a good line, does her ladyship ;  
And she knows every likely pool ;  
**And** you feel when you rise to her cunning flies  
That she understands her tool—  
With the sudden grip of the butt on  
her hip,  
And the best of good fishes a fool.

You are clean run up from the brine-cold sea,  
And you flash from the boil like a star ;  
**But** she laughs when you leap on a hook so deep,  
And—back you come, never so far.  
And she knows that the better sport  
will be

**The** more of a man you are.

**And** she knows well where sunk rocks the  
waters churn :

Every rapid and bend and reach ;  
**And** she throws a good line and fishes as fine  
Or as deep as she need for each.  
But you need not a second time to learn  
**The** lesson she has to teach.

## THE REBUKE

**I WILL** not understand your voice.

Look on my breast—my face—my hair :

**These** things are mine. There is no noise

Within this flesh of your despair.

**These** are my weapons, these my wine

With which I make men blind and drunk :

**I, Circe,** know the snouted swine :

**I, Judith,** laugh, and roll the trunk

**Of Holofernes** from the bed :

And if the accusing eye-balls stare

**Or** the lips blame me of the dead—

Holding the skull up by the hair,

**Upon** the mouth I strike the dog

Who knows not, choosing his own game :

**He** wins ?—I lie there like a log :

**He** loses ?—he shall do the same !

—**Ah,** if you plunder all my pride

How poor you make me in the end !

**If** God be surely on your side,

Leave me, at least, the Deuce, my friend !



## MAID'S ERROR

FOR shame, for shame :  
To put your faith  
In lips and eyes  
And trumperies—  
For shame for that !  
To him small blame  
If now he turn  
And criticise,  
From heels to hat,  
Your faith, you fool.  
Your dainty soul  
(The only thing !)—  
Your soul misgave :  
And so you flirt  
And take your fling,  
Because you thought  
That men were bought  
With dirt.  
Ah, dainty fool,  
You only make  
Yourself a tool  
For any knave.

## MAID'S TEST

**CAN** you put off your rich attire  
Here by the poor, black grate?  
Can you kneel down in lowly state—  
Can you make the fire?

**For**, one day, a man will call,  
Here in the cold, dark town—  
Call for you to burn down  
His sin-smitten citadel.

## HAIR-O'-GOLD

HAIR-O'-GOLD, hair-o'-gold,  
There, in the sun-light :  
Flee, flee, and shun light !  
Hair, the despair o' gold.

Or, by that omen,  
Hair-o'-gold, hair-o'-gold,  
How they have care o' gold,  
Soon shall you know men !

Hair-o'-gold, hair-o'-gold :  
Sell then the whole of you,  
Body and soul of you—  
A mere affair o' gold.

## ALL FOR THE SAKE OF A LADY

HEAD, an empty wooden box ;  
Heart, a pump ; and will and soul  
And what's left to him of body,  
Turned by sin to rotten shoddy,  
Staggering nightly down the Docks,  
Drunk, and helpless as a corpse—  
The poor man that loved you, lady.  
You had quite forgot him—quite, eh ?  
Led by shepherds of the flocks  
Into other pastures shady.

—Ah, you little thief of honey :  
Mated ? had your children ? gadded ?  
Urged your man win lots of money ?  
Spent it ? fashioned it and fadded ?—  
Don't you think the system right, eh ?  
Does it—as so much else strikes you—  
Does it strike your eye as “ funny ” ?



## CONSOLATION

VERY hurtful  
To the feeling ;  
Not to mention  
That sensation  
Sickening, stealing  
Underneath your  
Manly midriff—  
The other fellow turned up :  
Who the deuce are you !

Last night, say you,  
'Twas she lipped you ?  
And this morning  
The Almighty  
Isn't farther  
Than your pretty  
Little scorpion—  
Stinger, eh ?  
What I say is :  
Since she's whipped you,  
Take your whipping

Like the game,  
Good dog you are.

Don't you see it ?  
—You were but  
Another filbert  
In the cheek  
Of this she ape—  
Billy, Basil,  
Greg, and Gilbert—  
Turns all over with her tongue :  
Some one hands her up a peach—  
Into it her teeth are fixed  
When she's spat you out like mud.

## MODERN APOLOGUE

**WE** walked through the old and the wonderful  
garden :

**We**, women and men, in the Summer's late  
twilight.

**And** the woman beside me would look at me  
gravely,

**And**, speaking of Christ and of Buddha, her  
grey eyes

**Would** flash sudden light with strange glance  
after glance

**Quick** given and taken from mine.

**And** torture, she murmured, most certainly  
life was ;

**A** torture atrocious—atrocious endless,

**If** lived for oneself, yea, if lived for oneself.

**But** Buddha and Christ were the Masters of  
Wisdom,

**The** Wonderful Saviours, she said, of our souls.

**For**, though life was a torture, by death only  
ended—

**To** abnegate life and to die to the world,

To Pleasure, to Sin—was salvation, was peace!

I said that the wonderful flowers of the garden  
Had lived for themselves, and yet were they  
wonderful.

I said that the iron was beaten and bent  
And tortured at last into steel ;  
And, saying it gravely, we came to the others ;  
She, heeding not—looking round keenly with  
hawk-face.

We joined them : the stars looked through  
shadowy leaf-work.

I felt my arm touched as all met round the  
myrtle :

Men, silent and stupid and eager ; and women,  
Awake and with all of their senses about them.

I mused for an instant : This matter of sex  
still

Exhibits at moments the bird-of-prey's  
instincts ;

And—what was that ? Something down there  
on her talon



That glimmered and sparkled, alight in the  
star-shine. . . .

Just then, ere a word had been spoken of any,  
I sprang to a movement and striking of wings—  
My right arm was suddenly seized in a grim  
clutch,

And deep in the flesh of my arm and my  
left side

A bird-of-prey's talons were driven and fixed ;  
And with the blunt shock of a bird-of-prey's  
strong wings,

Down, down to the earth I was stricken, all  
powerless ;

And round me the covering, great wings were  
spread out,

Ashake with her passions of hunger and hate ;  
And cruel and red were the bird's eyes  
above me,

And deeper and deeper her talons were  
piercing

The flesh of me, lying there, held down and  
fought for :

With hissing and crying of kites and of eagles,  
They fought for the flesh, the flesh of the  
men ;

And, as they were fighting, I swooned—and  
awoke.

## THANKS

SWEET, is it blind you are ?

Sweet, is it kind you are ?

Sweet, is it pitiful ?

I'm the most cursed of men,

Yea, quite the worst of men

Of the whole city full.

That's what they tell me, dear ;

That's what they knell me, dear,

Week day and Sunday, too—

Up you come straight to me,

Grip my hand—prate to me—

Shocking to Grundy, too !

Were I but free to it,

Should not I see to it—

Should not I shine there, sweet ?

But, being the worst of men,

The most accursed of men,

I draw the line there, sweet.

## MAY

IN that fresh gust  
At the top of the street  
Where, like a sheet,  
Uplifts the dust,

Streams a wild skirt,  
Struggles a frail  
Body and pale  
Flower-face alert—

Stabs like a knife  
Deep in my clay—  
Ah, month of May—  
Bitter as life.



## THE IDLER

I MOVE through the idle street,  
Nearer your happy place ;  
But I see in the idle, strange faces I meet,  
Only one face.

And day-long I stand above  
My tired and idle loom ;  
For between your face and mine, love,  
Is the world's room.

## IN BRITTANY

In Brittany I lost my way.

Ah, happy girl-child of sixteen :

Whatever my strange tongue might mean  
You knew not, nor the thing to say,

Till a sad kiss fell on your lips,

When, unconfused, you ceased to smile,

And answered : "Up the hill a mile  
Stands fair 'Our Lady of the Ships':

"We pray there for our folk at sea,

And then they are not wrecked nor tossed,

But come back safe, and are not lost

—And you may pray there, sir, for me."

## A NAME

Just when Death took you by the arm  
And gave you his look in the eyes  
I knew—I only ; and how dies  
Young love, young life ; and whose the harm.

You did not stay there at his feet ?  
Because—he killed you ? That was it.  
Dead cousin : how a man may hit,  
Yet never touch one's body, sweet.

And so, with cold steel in his breath,  
For some dark reason of his own,  
He saw you smile, and heard you groan,  
And struck, and gave you up to Death.

And you (O coward !) drew from him  
Suddenly, like one blind . . . In dreams  
We shake dead people off : so seems  
Then he. Your name is blurred and dim.

## SPRING

UNDER the street stones, down far beneath us,  
Under each stone that each warm foot  
embraces,

Old earth and nature, still ; all that makes  
breathe us ;

Over us, darkening heavens of blue :  
And here, where the lights and the shadows  
enwreath us,

Missed in the shining but marked in the shade,  
The look of the Spring on the women's faces,  
The simple women that God hath made.

## SCORN

My step is strong,  
My glance is keen,  
My voice is deep :  
I sing no song,  
No tryst I keep  
For any quean.

Of forest trees  
My mind is full,  
And drenching grass—  
Why, things like these  
For much do pass  
With any trull.

Or, lined with gold  
Each London rut,  
Perchance I sing :  
—She would be told  
Of such a thing !  
The common slut.



So, if like me,  
You love like this—  
Come, light-o'-love,  
Who clean can see  
An inch above  
A woman's kiss.

## TRIBUTE

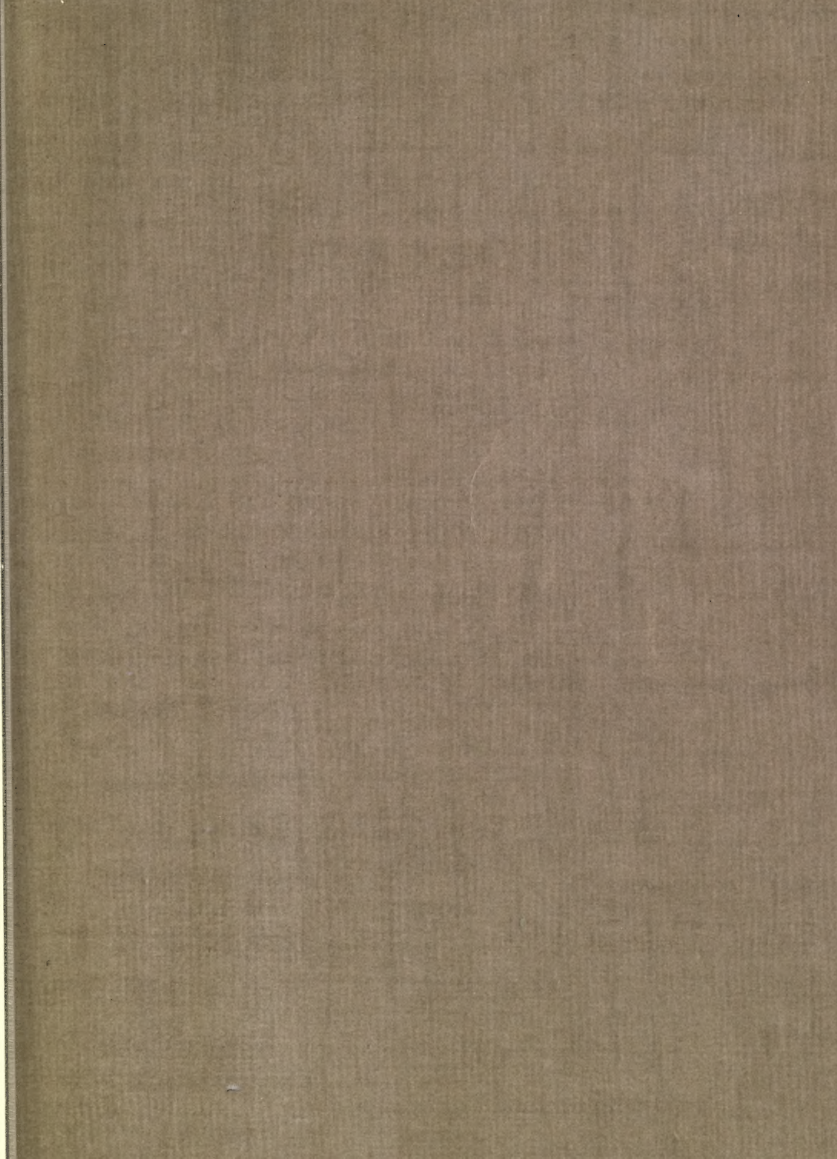
HUNGRY for the savage tribe!

Thank the God who keeps you thus,  
Still unmoved by any bribe  
Less than—just the God in us.

Bending down the neck before  
Courage, brain, and heart, and thew :  
Eve to Adam true—and more :  
Eve to type for ever true :

Sickening at our gods of gold ;  
Shuddering at fools that dote ;  
Holding fast the thing you hold,  
Though the knife be at your throat,

For a man to will and dare ;  
Blindly certain only then  
For the children that you bear  
And the motherhood of men.







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